

Ken once was perhaps the youngest American fighting man since the Civil War. At the age of just 14, he talked his way into the fight when World War II was raging. When the Navy found out that this seaman assigned to the destroyer escort USS *Edwin A. Howard* was far younger than he had claimed, they put him ashore in the Philippines. He spent two months hitch-hiking his way back to North Carolina in something of a Huckleberry Finn odyssey. He still calls that journey the greatest adventure of his life. "What young boy wouldn't love an adventure like that?" he still asks today, puzzled that most of us would find such a challenge daunting indeed.

Ken wasn't about to let a little thing like age keep him from serving his country, and when he turned 18 he legally signed on once again, this time in the Army. His fighting days had only just begun. He rose through the ranks as an enlisted man and then an officer, a man's man in charge of men. It was during the Korean Conflict that the rare commitment and courage of this man was most remarkable. Again and again, he led his men into battle and never lost a one though he on several occasions personally braved enemy fire to return to the battlefield to rescue wounded fallen comrades. Once wounded himself, he was ordered by doctors to recuperate far from the sounds of battle. He refused to leave his men, and returned to the front lines once again and to more battles.

To this day, Ken carries in his aging body the shrapnel from twice having been blown up by grenades, and he bears the scars that testify to the fact that he has faced and survived many battles.

He served our country for all those years as a military man, and then he served his fellow Americans as something of a rogue in the greeting card industry. And he did that so well that his efforts saved two major national companies from disappearing prematurely at the hands of corporate raiders and kept hundreds of Americans at work for years in the greeting card industry.

Simpson lives a quiet life now in a home atop Walker Bald, a tall mountain in western North Carolina, which he shares with his wife Laura. Though his steps have slowed and his hearing is no longer as keen as it once was—despite the concussions of nearby exploding grenades of the past—he remains the epitome of an American fighting man.

And America owes Kenneth Walton Simpson and fighting men such as him our sincere appreciation. On behalf of the citizens of the Sixth District of North Carolina, I am proud to bring his story to light through this statement in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and to highlight Wilt Browning's outstanding book about an outstanding North Carolina and American hero.

#### TRIBUTE TO JENNIFER SOMA

#### HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2013

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate and recognize Jennifer Soma for being named a 2013 Forty Under 40 honoree by the award-winning central Iowa publication, *Business Record*.

Since 2000, *Business Record* has undertaken an exhaustive annual review to identify a standout group of young leaders in the Greater Des Moines area who are making an impact in their communities and their careers. Each year, forty up-and-coming community and business leaders under 40 years of age are selected for this prestigious distinction, which is based on a combined criteria of community involvement and success in their chosen career field. The 2013 class of Forty Under 40 honorees join an impressive roster of 560 business leaders and growing.

Jennifer Soma oversees product development and new initiatives in the individual disability insurance business for Principal Financial Group Inc. In this role, Jennifer serves as a liaison between the operations, quality assurance and information technology facets of the business. Outside of the office, Jennifer spends nearly 30 hours a week in various volunteer roles to make her community better. One of Ms. Soma's biggest passions is her dedication to animal welfare. Before working for Principal, Jennifer worked for the Animal Rescue League of Iowa in numerous roles including major rescue efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and Iowa flooding. Ms. Soma certainly takes her causes home with her as she shares her Ankeny home with her four senior rescue dogs and continues to advocate for animals through her efforts at Iowa Voters for Companion Animals/Iowa Friends of Companion Animals. Also a big supporter and alumnus of Drake University, Jennifer currently chairs Drake's Graduate Student Advisory Council. Last year, Jennifer's numerous volunteer efforts earned her the recognition of the U.S. Presidential Volunteer Service Award—Gold Level for volunteering more than 1,000 hours of her time. In all facets of her life, Jennifer is an example of hard work and service that our state can be proud of.

Mr. Speaker, it is a profound honor to represent leaders like Jennifer in the United States Congress and it is with great pride that I recognize and applaud Ms. Soma for utilizing her talents to better both her community and the great state of Iowa. I invite my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Jennifer on receiving this esteemed designation, thanking those at *Business Record* for their great work, and wishing each member of the 2013 Forty Under 40 class continued success.

#### HONORING THE INTERNATIONAL CENTENNIAL PLANNING CONFERENCE PREPARING FOR THE ANNIVERSARY OF WORLD WAR I

#### HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2013

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise today to welcome and acknowledge our national and international visitors to the International Centennial Planning Conference. The conference is being hosted by the National World War I Museum, located in Missouri's Fifth District, on March 22–24, 2013. With the recent enactment of Public Law 112–272 to establish a World War I Centennial Commission, it is vital that the exchange with our historical counterparts begin.

This was the first global war, declared on July 28, 1914, after the assassination of Arch-

duke Franz Ferdinand. The United States entered the war in 1917 and concluded with the signing of the Armistice on November 11, 1918. The world would never be the same as the ramifications changed nations, warfare and technology. The reality of war comes with the understanding of its effects, not only geographically but on the military and all of the people who endured the suffering of war.

Representatives and scholars from the allied nations of Australia, France, Canada, Germany, United Kingdom, and Belgium will join representatives from the United States to exchange ideas on international planning for the Centennial. This workshop will foster coordination of commemorating these historical events and rediscovery of our combined involvement in World War I. The lessons of war will be discussed and viewed through an international prism to obtain a better understanding of how the "War to End All Wars" impacted and changed the course of history.

In Kansas City, we have progressed as a city under the flame of the Liberty Memorial. The Liberty Memorial stands as a testimonial to the past and a quest for our world living in peace. Since my time as Mayor of Kansas City, I have considered the Liberty Memorial and now the National World War I Museum a treasure worth fighting to protect and preserve.

As the World War I Centennial Commission's twelve members meet to plan for the commemorative events across our nation, it will do so under the flame of the Liberty Memorial and benefit from the work garnered from this planning conference.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues in the House join me in wishing the participants of the International Centennial Planning Conference success in their collaboration. There is a lot of work to do in honoring and commemorating the history from our first global war.

#### ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

#### HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 21, 2013

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the anniversary of Greek Independence Day, in recognition of the courageous revolution that freed the people of Greece from the Ottoman Empire and established the modern Hellenic Republic. We come together to recognize Greek Independence in advance this year because the U.S. Congress will not be in session on March 25th.

There is no doubt that Greece's struggle for freedom from the Ottoman Empire is one which inspired the world. Carrying out a bold and inspired revolution, the people of Greece set an example for others in the region and globally. Their commitment to genuine self-determination made it possible for millions to determine their own future rather than continue a pattern of subjugation.

And, since establishing diplomatic relations with the United States, Greece has joined our own country in many cooperative endeavors, including during World War II in the fight against fascism. Today, the United States and Greece are not only partners in commerce,